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PEEPS

INTO

SOCIAL LIFE IN CALCUTTA

A

CENTURY AGO.

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BY

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PEEPS INTO SOCIAL LIFE IN CALCUTTA A CENTURY AGO.

A History of the rise of Calcutta a desideratum.

The study of an antiquarian subject, bearing on the *social* life of the past, is interesting, not only as a branch of valuable knowledge, but also as tending to draw off the mind from too much attention to the petty interests of the present and from many trifling carking cares. We feel invigorated and refreshed after an hour spent in communing with the olden time, and enter with more energy on the battle of life.

To those who are dissatisfied with the existing social state, the study of the past of Calcutta is calculated to yield comfort, by showing what reason we have to be thankful that our lives are cast upon better days, and that we have so many advantages of a social nature above our predecessors of last century.

We call this paper *Peeps* into Calcutta Society, for, alas! time has swept so much of the past both of men and books into oblivion, that only a few floating fragments can be found, and especially on our subject, which relates mainly to the period immediately previous and subsequent to the battle of Plassey,—when there was no newspaper to record the passing events of the day,—no printing press,—no Calcutta correspondent to the English press;—while letters were few and far between, a year and a half being allowed for the despatch and answer to a letter. The earthquake and inundation of 1737 in Calcutta destroyed many documents, and the capture of the city in 1756 completed the destruction.

No more valuable contribution could be made to social science and to history than a memoir of the rise and social progress of Calcutta, both European and Native. The Government Records in the India House in London, amounting to 100,000 volumes, open out a rich store-house in this respect to the future historian of Calcutta; a city, which, like St. Petersburgh, sprang out of a swamp, is surely one of the most interesting subjects for enquiry. We trust that ere long some one may bring out the Life and Times of Job Charnock, the founder of Calcutta, whose remains lie in St. John's Burial Ground, in a splendid Mausoleum, the oldest piece of masonry in Calcutta; beside him is interred his Hindu wife whom he rescued

as a widow from the funeral pyre, at whose tomb he was said to have sacrificed a cock annually.

People complain now of Calcutta as being dull, of there being little recreation; what would they have said a century ago, when a few hours a day sufficed for the business in hand, which was chiefly commercial, and mainly transacted at the time the ships from Europe arrived in the river, and when they were departing. The Portuguese Kerani did the writing part, and that in so slovenly a fashion as to call down the censure of the Court of Directors. There was little letter writing, as the first post between Calcutta and Allahabad was not established until 1765. The first Newspaper, *Hicky's Gazette*, appeared in 1780, and news came only in the season of the ships, the cold weather, some nine months old, except when a chance vessel arrived from Bussorn in the Persian Gulf, conveying intelligence by way of Aleppo and the Mediterranean.* Hence there was little correspondence. There was little music, for there were only some two dozen European ladies in Calcutta, and the Court of Directors seem to have thought even that number more than sufficient; a despatch arrived in Calcutta about that period, giving orders that when a Miss Campbell, who had left for Calcutta without a pass, landed there, she should be forthwith sent back to England; and in another case three ladies, who had applied to the Court for a license to go to Calcutta, were distinctly refused, on the ground that there were ladies enough in the place. Further there were few instruments for ladies to play on; artists were not then skilled in adapting them to the climate; pianos in hot weather with open doors soon cracked and warped; or just the fate of an organ which in 1751 was sent out for the Calcutta Church, but on being opened it fell to pieces, all the wood work having been eaten up by white ants. Europeans however went to matches, which were then popular. As for dinner parties or *soirées*, what was the comfort of being crowded in a place of smoking dishes without punkahs, for punkahs were not then known.

There were no carriage drives; no course with a view of the muddy Hooghly's stream and a change of dust. What with the use of carriages without European carriage-builders or repairers? Natives could not then repair carriages. Even now, after a century has passed away, not a single good Native carriage-builder has set up in Calcutta—the fact deserves enquiry as revealing a very unsatisfactory state of things among the native working classes. Even had there been European coach-builders, what springs could have stood roads

* As late as 1811, Sir J. Mackintosh writes from Bombay—"We are now seven weeks from the date of the last London news."

knee-deep in mud, with lepers, naked fakeers, Brahmini bulls, camels, elephants, &c., besetting the thoroughfares; for as late as Daniell's time, 1780, elephants and camels were allowed to traverse the streets of Calcutta, as is shewn in his pictures which give us admirable sketches of the olden time, particularly of Calcutta. Men riding in carriages seemed from the jolting to be affected with St. Vitus' dance, while taking an airing was represented as taking a dusting or jolting. Before the battle of Plassey the Governor and senior member of Council only used a carriage.

Riding was dangerous beyond the bounds* of Calcutta, which were infested with wild animals, the boar and the tiger, (pig-sticking was however a favorite amusement,) while the fierce Mahratta, like the Italian Brigand, hung around, watching for his prey. He often carried men off, tied to the tail of his horse.

How heavily did the day pass and how wearisome! A few hours sufficed for business, from 9 to 12 in an ordinary way; the hukah and a hasty breakfast brought men to the middle of the day. The dinner hour was about 2 o'clock; after dinner, and the smoking from a highly ornamented silver hukah which had a special servant for it, the invariable siesta followed, when all, both ladies and gentlemen, undressed and went to bed. Undressing was necessary, for there were no punkahs, and, as glass windows only came into fashion in the time of Clive, "Two hours of sleep (all Calcutta from 3 to 5 being as still as the grave) and people were up again, some to fishing or walking in the Park, now Dalhousie Square, (Tank Square, with the grove on the east side, was the Belgravia or Hyde Park of that day;) some had an occasional pig-sticking match, or tiger hunt in the jungle of Chowringhi plain; some took the air in a palki; a favorite recreation however, was boating in a handsome budgerow with a band of music in attendance. Various gentlemen kept sailing boats, and the exercise the jungly land denied them was afforded by the water; there were new ships to interrupt their course; and many a pleasant sailing excursion was made between Thanah (or, as now the Botanic Gardens, and the Dutch Settlement of Barnagore. Returning home, the undertide filled up

* The boundary of Calcutta in 1707 was, to the south, the Creek which ran from the Site of the Bank of Bengal and Chandpal Ghat across Chowringhi Road to the Salt Water Lakes; to the east, the Circular Road; to the north, Dhurrumtollah Street, and the Hog (or Mahratta) Ditch; to the west, the Ganges, probably between Wellesley Place, Chowringhi and Mahratta Ditch. Calcutta, formed of islands which purchased was confirmed in 1698. It was only 15 miles square. Calcutta was then known as a Settlement. It was subsequently raised into the subsequency of Presidency, when [illegible]

the time until 10 o'clock, the supper hour. There was one good practice, they paid visits in the evening, when men were not imprisoned in black coats, for white jackets were the rule which continued even beyond the Marquis of Wellesley's time; visits were short, and half a dozen could be made in one evening—except on theatre night, for Calcutta had its theatre, which was situated to the north east end of the Writer's Buildings. The Church stood at the west end.

Late parties could be easily kept up, as the Company's servants had little to do, besides providing the annual investment, and, except in trade which they carried on on their own account, the rest was *vive la bagatelle*. Stavorinus, a Dutch traveller, in 1769, writes:—"The Company's servants devote a part of the morning to attending upon their business; they spend the remainder of their time either in revels or sleep." He himself was entertained by the Governor of Bengal at a dinner party at 1 o'clock in the day. Even as late as Lord Cornwallis' time public dinners were given at 3, then a ball at 8, and supper at 12.

How dull the conversation must have been without mails, news 9 months old, except when it came by Bussorah. Doubtless it turned on the interlopers, the adventurers, the Nawab's Agents, the Mahrattas, the *Gomashtas*, our dangerous neighbours the Dutch and French, High Church and Low Church, the Papists and hurricanes, and the last importation of young ladies on spec. This dull state was relieved occasionally by the irritation of prickly heat, and of musquito bites, when people covered their legs with paste-board, to save themselves from the stings. Sir J. Shore writes in 1775:—"Dancing, riding, hunting, and shooting are now our employments"; copying work was left to keranis, and the European was practically often merely an expensive instrument for signing his name.

Gambling was in vogue with a zeal equalling that of a Russian nobleman's penchant; the Marquis Cornwallis gave that and other evils a deadly blow. Immense sums were won and lost at Billiards.

Horse-racing, attended by the wealth and fashion of Calcutta, was popular, but the first ground was in the Chowringhi paddy fields, subsequently at Akra farm, or *Girad Khaud*, below Garden Reach.

Duelling, arising often out of quarrels regarding ladies of sooty complexion, occasionally gave a little excitement. The last Cyclone has levelled the famous duelling tree, which, according to

popular tradition was on the Chowringhee plain, where Hastings and Francis fought. Francis, who ought to know, places it near Belvidere.

Drinking helped to pass away the time, the practice of drinking mulled wine early in the morning was common in the Bombay Presidency; in Calcutta we believe it was arrack-punch, which was then what peg are now; men would finish a chest of claret at a sitting; subsequently the taste for claret and madeira went out, and one person would drink a dozen of beer in the course of the day. Hence we need not wonder that it was said of some of the residents, their lives were not worth two monsoons,—a short life and a merry one.

Boating was a favorite amusement; bands of music were taken in fine burgerows, and excursion parties were made as far as Chandernagore or Chinsura, where fancy-balls used occasionally to be given by the French and Dutch.

Subscription balls were kept up; we find that in 1781 the Stewards of a Subscription Assembly refused to pass a charge of 1,907 Rs. for the entertainment of 200 persons.

Let us now take a ramble through the Calcutta of 1750. Suppose some one had undertaken a morning walk a century ago from the site of our President's house in Ballygunge to Calcutta, it would have been a most perilous enterprise, a heavy mist from the woods hanging over the country, dense as that now to be seen in the interior of the Sunderbunds, along a narrow footpath approaching very close to the lair of the tiger and leopard. The pedestrian would pass over the ground where some of the Nawab's troops were encamped when he came to attack Calcutta in 1756, by a path leading to the site of the Martiniere, but there was no crossing as the Mahratta Ditch, dug in 1742 by the inhabitants of Calcutta at their own expense, to keep off the Cossacks of that day, the Mahrattas,* went round Calcutta from the site of the Martiniere to Bag Bazar and barred the passage. This ditch, at first deep and broad, subsequently became a fetid and putrid pit, the receptacle of dead cats and dogs, until the Marquis of Wellesley had it filled up and the present

* The Mahratta empire originated in a movement of the Hindus to throw off the Mogul yoke. When the Deccan Sawars could not remit their revenue to Delhi, they allowed the Mahrattas to collect by force the Chout or fourth part. Bhaskar Pandit, in consequence, at the head of 80,000 horse invaded Bengal, aided by the Rajas of Birbhum and Bisenpur offended at their treatment by Ali Vardy Khan, hence it was quite time to fortify Calcutta. In 1743, the Mahrattas held Birbhum and all the country west of the Hugly from Balasore to Tiantulah's Post, Calcutta.

Circular Road made on its site.* Amid great difficulties the way is threaded in slush under an avenue of trees as far as Boitakhana, where the pedestrian could rest for a while under the shade of that broad tree which afforded shelter to the Patriarch of Calcutta—Job Charnock, who like a genuine Oui Hye he is said to have smoked his pipe, and, struck with the rural beauty of the scene, selected Calcutta as the seat of the English in Bengal.† This tree was cut down in 1799 to make the present Circular Road; it was the *rendezvous* of native merchants from the east, where they met to go from Calcutta or to start for the town, the neighbouring jungle being infested with dacoits. The question has been often asked, why was Calcutta not placed on the right bank of the Hooghly, which the French, Danes, and Dutch found to be more healthy. The main reasons we believe to have been: The left bank had deeper water, the weavers who supplied the Company with piece goods lived chiefly there, and it was not so exposed to the raids of the Mahrattas as the Howrah side.

We next pass down Bow-Bazar, then solitary; the Boitakanna Church and Madrassa were among its first buildings, but not until about 1780. *Lal* Bazar is arrived at. Why was it called *Lal* or red? Tank Square is called Laldigi, was it from the Old Church which was called Lal Girja, because it was built of bricks which were not covered with a layer of white-wash, but appeared flashing red. *Lal* Bazar was then rather a fashionable place; the Apollo Tavern, the Wilson's of that day, was there, as was the Harmonic Hotel, and doubtless, the sailors of Calcutta frequented the spot, known even in those days for their drunken broils, but there were

* In 1799 this road was made. It is thus described in a newspaper in 1802: "In the Circular Road the young and the sprightly, in the fragrance of morning wafted in the scents of health, enjoy the pleasant exercise."

† As to the reason for settling in Calcutta, we give the following story, not to be relied on now a very eminent Chubeen's Brigade: "The English factory at Hoogly having had words with a woman into the river in the middle of the day while the English were at dinner; the new lives were lost and the rest escaped with difficulty, but their merchandize and property of every description entirely perished; hence Governor Charnock looked out for another place, he chose another one near it, erected a factory and fortified it; but the native merchants complained that their women were ravished from the English houses, some of which were two stories high. The natives repaired to Murshaabad to complain, and orders came to proclaim holding the Factory the same as rebels. Orders issued to work two days Charnock setting fire to all the houses on this side the river embarked in a ship, the Punjdar sent orders to the Thannadar at Mukwah Thannah (near Calcutta) to stop the ship; he ran an iron chain across the river, produced some days before, to impede the incursions of the pirates of Arakan and the Mugs who used to infest the river, but the chain was broken by the English. The Ships having provided Alum-ee's Camp with corn in a time of scarcity, the Mogul became favourable to Charnock, and permitted him to erect the Calcutta Factory."

not numerous, as the greater part had to remain with the ships which only came up to Diamond Harbour. The next spot is the Tyburn of Calcutta the crossing of Lal Bazar, at which stood the Great Jail where, down to the beginning of this century, executions used to take place. A case is on record of a man having been hung there in 1802 for stealing a watch. This Jail was not a strong one, as we have an account, a century ago, of a body of French prisoners making their escape from it. The road to the south leads by Cossitolla, (now strangely metamorphosed into Bentinck Street) so called from the *kassais* or butchers, who made it their head quarters; in that day, no single joint of meat could be had in Calcutta, the entire animal had to be bought, and the tables groaned under hecatombs of mutton or beef, while the shoemaker would be in attendance on the butcher to get the skin tanned, and provide the material for a pair of shoes—which were then, as now, very *kutcha* affairs.

The east side of Cossitolla was jungly; you cross Creek Row, which ran from the river near the site of the Bank of Bengal down to the north side of Dhuruntola into the Salt Water lakes, which were then close to Calcutta, wafting their pestiferous vapours, nearly as bad as those which *may* come when the drainage scheme shall be completed. There was no Dhuruntola then; even down to 1780 there were only straw huts in it. You pass along the Chowringhee road, surrounded with dense jungle on both sides. Chowringhee then was out of town and in the woods; the chief use of the Chowringhee road was in leading to the shrine of Kalighat, which was the temple of Calcutta, and probably gave its name to the city. The temple of Kalighat stood for centuries, when the Ganges itself, some miles wide, laved its walls, when human blood streamed on its altars, and when Thugs, before proceeding on their murderous expeditions, made their devoirs to Kali. There is, south of the Jail, a small temple of Siva which is several centuries old; the river Ganges, then a mighty stream, once flowed up to its steps.

We return now to Lal Bazar, and proceed north along the Chitpur road leading to the famous temple of Chiteswari. On the west side of the road was the then fashionable part of Calcutta, occupied by English, Armenians, Portuguese, extending over what are now the China and Bara Bazars down to the site of the Mint. Here the Armenian millionaires lived, who, acting differently from the English, did not interneddle in country politics, but devoted themselves entirely to trade, and realised large sums.

Sobha Bazar was then a jungle, though when Nabakissen, Clive's Munshi, settled there after the battle of Plassey, it rose rapidly in buildings and population. Mention is made of it in 1780 as frequented by sailors, and of a great fire having occurred there, when Jack was very active in rescuing native's property from the flames.

Places like Sobha Bazar, Pathureeghata, now so densely peopled, were little known before the battle of Plassey which raised Calcutta from a Settlement to a City, and helped to make it a City of Palaces in front,—huts of pigstyes in the rear. Raja Radhakant Deb's, the Tagore family, and various others had to leave Gobindpore when Fort William was built on its site. They settled in Pathureeghata, and Sobha Bazar. We pass a very old Hindu temple in the Chitpur road, built about 1730 by Gobindram Mittre, famous for its high cupola. We come then to an opening that led to Dum-Dum, getting into note in those days, as we find Civilians used to go to Baraset for change of air. Lord Clive had the first house there. We next arrive at Perrin's Point near Perrin's Gardens, once a place of recreation for Civil Servants, pass close to the Mahratta Ditch, which extended from the river to Panchkatí; near it were the celebrated gardens of those days, Gobindo Mittre's and Omichand's, both Bengali millionaires, and very clever men of business. The road led on to Chitpur, to the Nawab's gardens, and terminated at Barunagar, a Dutch Settlement, gay and crowded in those days, when Dutch fleets rode in front, and Dutch *frows* sported themselves in all the colors of the rainbow.

The following is a sketch given of Calcutta in 1717:—"Calcutta in A. D. 1717, was then a village appertaining to the district of Nuddea, the houses of which were scattered in clusters of ten or twelve each, and the inhabitants chiefly husbandmen. A forest existed to the south of Chandpaul Ghat, which was afterwards removed by degrees. Between Khidderpore and the forest were two villages, whose inhabitants were invited to settle in Calcutta by the ancient family of the Seths, who were at that time merchants of great note, and very instrumental in bringing Calcutta into the form of a town. Fort William and the Esplanade are the site where the forest and the two villages above mentioned stood. In 1717 there was a straggling village, consisting of small houses, surrounded by paddles of water, where now stand the elegant houses of Chowringhee; and though Calcutta may at this period be described as extending to Chitpur bridge, the intervening space consisted of ground covered with jungle."

Let us now take another survey of Calcutta from the roof of the Governor's House, a fine building south of the Old Fort; the President's House and Grounds stretched from the site of the Metcalfe Hall to Tank Square. Due East of us is Tank Square, called the Park, the tank in which seems to have been coeval with Calcutta, though it must have been cleared out to build in it a flight of steps to the bottom, which is 60 feet from the top of its banks. On the north-western side of Tank-Square stood the church, erected in 1715, chiefly through the contributions of sea-faring men, and merchants; the steeple fell down in the earthquake of 1737, when a hurricane took place that rolled the Ganges many feet over its bed, much higher than in 1865. This church was pulled down by the Mahommedans in 1756. It was the custom of the Governor to walk to this church, one reason for which was the Court informing him, in 1728, that if he wanted a chaise and pair he must pay for them himself. To the north of it was the Armenian church, erected at the expense of an Armenian merchant in 1724, which was plundered, but not pulled down in 1756, the Armenians standing well with the native powers on account of their abstinence from politics. East of that was the Old Court House erected by Mr. Bouchier * in 1726 for accommodating the Mayor and Aldermen as a Sessions house; subsequently rooms were added to it which made it a kind of Town Hall. Calcutta then had a Municipality, the Mayor was elected by the Government every December, but it had nothing to do with drains; however "as early as 1749, the Government ordered the drains to be re-surveyed to make the settlement sweet and wholesome."

We shall finish our ramble with the river. What a gloomy scene the river below Chandpal Ghat presented! Opposite were the dreary jungly shores of Howra tenanted chiefly by wild animals. A line of mud banks, reeking with malaria, corpses, in all stages of decomposition, floating up and down the stream by the dozen, jungle lining the shore, the abode of the snake and the alligator. Where Chandpal Ghat now rises were to be seen the Sati fires, the *Ighori* eating dead men's flesh, and women carrying away, as holy, the water in which a Brahmin's feet had been washed. In another quarter a Brahmin might have been seen sitting Dharna.

Now as to a question of our day—Sanitation. The sanitary condition of the English in Calcutta was in one respect better than now; the Europeans lived in garden houses close to the river, and enjoyed its refreshing health-bearing breezes, while there was no

* A rich merchant, who subsequently became Governor of Bombay. He gave it to Government on condition they paid 4,000 rupees annually to support a charity school.

dense native population behind. All the Europeans grouped as near as they could under the sheltering protection of the fort, in case of Mahratta or Mogul invasion, so that the river easily carried off the drainage of Calcutta. There was no epidemic cholera then to decimate the people, though there was an endemic cholera called *le mort de chien;* but, on the other hand, Calcutta was surrounded by deadly undrained swamps reeking with malaria, the abode of the alligator, wild boar and tiger, the Sunderbunds being within a couple of miles at the east. It is not long since an old gentleman, Mr. Blacquiere, died, who shot wild fowl in the swamps near Tank Square. Even as late as the days of Warren Hastings, when he sought the sheltering shades of Belvidere, the Chowringhee plain was so jungly and swampy that he had sometimes to proceed by water to Shurman's Bridge* at Kidderpore, up the Gobindpur Creek which subsequently became Tolly's Nulla, but was then part of the old bed of the Ganges, which, washing the steps of the old temple south of the Great Jail, proceeded down by Kalighat, wafting malaria and fever in its channel.

No wonder malaria was rife. There were few fresh vegetables, no potatoes were grown, and people were imprudent. The dead bodies, not only of beasts, but of human beings, were to be seen at times lying in the streets, in a putrid state, under a blazing sun. In 1780 it is reported the Surgeon of an Indiaman expired in the street after eating a hearty dinner of beef, the thermometer being at 98°.

But though exempt from cholera, the pestilence that smiteth in darkness, it may be inferred from the jungle around, that Calcutta was a second Cayenne or Batavia; a putrid fever desolated the land, which covered the body with blotches of a livid colour, causing death in a few hours. Even when I came to the country, 28 years ago, it seemed to have been an understood thing that every new arrival must have his seasoning fever.†

The earliest notice we have of the sanitary state of Calcutta, the New Orleans of that day, is in the travels of Captain Hamilton,

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* Shurman, an Armenian, was sent in 1715 on an embassy to the King of Delhi.

† Calcutta is thus described in an old poem by Atkinson:

"Embowering jungle and noxious fen,
"Fatal to many a bold aspiring wight:
"On every side tall trees shut out the sight,
"And like the upas noisome vapors shed;
"Day blazed with heat intense and dusky night
"Brought damps excessive, and a feverish bed;
"The revellers at eve were in the morning dead."

about 1690, who describes an hospital into which many patients went, but few came out alive to give an account of their treatment,—dead dogs tell no tales. On an average about one-third of the crew of a ship perished from disease arising from exposure and arrack. One good indicator of the mortality was the immense sums of money that undertakers made; the rainy season was their harvest time, when, in some years, only one-fourth of the European population survived, and when a large dinner party used to be given on the 15th of October, for the survivors to congratulate each other on their being alive. Hamilton mentions that in 1700 there were 1,200 English in Calcutta, but the following January 460 were buried.* Calcutta had two Doctors, on the salaries of £25 a year each, but then they, like others, had a percentage on various articles, not excepting their share in the Madeira. As affecting the sanitary condition, there was not much to be said for the Doctors of that day, though there were some first rate men. A squib in a Calcutta paper in 1780 thus describes them:—

> But consider the cause sure, t'will give one the grip man,
> To see dubbed a Doctor, a special good Midshipman,
> Who handles your pulse, as he 'd handle a rope,
> And conceives your complaint just as clear as the Pope,
> Some Doctors in India would make Plato smile,
> If you fracture your skull, they pronounce it the bile,
> And with terrific Phiz, and a stare most sagacious,
> Give a horse ball of Jalap and pills saponaceous.

In 1805, Lord Valentia writes of the improved salubrity of Calcutta, which he attributes to the filling up of tanks, the clearing away of jungle, better constructed houses, and more temperance.

In 1793, Dr. Leskard opened baths at 37 China Bazar, price one rupee a bath; they did not pay. As regards the want of swimming and vapor baths, Calcutta is as bad as Rome itself: though Rome has not the three hundred stenches of Calcutta.

It is not surprising that Calcutta had a bad reputation in England, on account of its liver-decayed old Indian, with his parchment face—Indian Nawabs as they were called. But was not a certain amount of the ill-health of Calcutta owing to the irregular lives of Europeans? The common class used to drink the new arrack and then walk in the streets under a blazing sun—many met their deaths there.

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* The proportion may be correct of deaths to residents, but we rather doubt whether there were 1,200 *Europeans* unless Portuguese and Armenians were included under that head; in 1756 there were only 70 houses in Calcutta belonging to the English, though Holwell calculated there were 400,000 people in 1750 in Calcutta.

Though stagnation of mind is unfavorable to health and though Calcutta had little news, it had its panics then, not from an enemy distant like the Śikhs in the Punjab, or the mutineers in the North-West, but from an enemy much nearer home,—the French. At that period the belief was firmly rooted in Englishmen's minds, that the French were natural enemies; that a Frenchman should only be met at the point of the sword. This foolish and anti-christian feeling followed both parties to India, and as the Dutch and Portuguese fought until the latter were driven out, so was it with the French and English : the English knew that the Nawab loved neither, but he did not wish for the expulsion of the French, wishing to keep them as a check on the English. The French had then a powerful fleet at sea, one broadside from which, if it had come up the river, would have laid Fort William, with its honey-combed guns and short supply of powder, in ruins, while at Chandernagore, the French had a fort much stronger than Fort William, manned by men greater in number and better equipped than the English, the latter attending so little to measures of defence as to have some of the embrasures of Fort William stuffed with cotton bags. We may conceive the state of alarm then, when any day might see a French fleet in the river to sweep the English out of Bengal, when French cruisers infested the mouth of the Hooghly, and Pilot Schooners were captured by them in Balasore Roads.

Not only the French, but also the Mahrattas were the source of alarm. As late as 1780, there was great excitement in Calcutta in consequence of 40,000 Mahrattas being at Cuttack ; happily fluxes and fever rapidly reduced their numbers, but they came to the neighbourhood of Howrah. Mention is made of a Mrs. Bower, who died about 1780, who had by industry accumulated wealth, but she was so apprehensive of Calcutta being again taken, that in her last illness she used to start up in her bed, calling out to her servant that the French and Mahrattas were breaking into her house to carry away her money. She had escaped when the Fort was taken in 1756 having hid herself in a warehouse, and fled at night by a boat. No wonder she thought of the cruelties of the Mahrattas, who did not scruple to cut off the hands, noses, and ears of those they took prisoners and have been known even to cut off the breasts of women.

Not only was alarm from the French*; the Mugs were in the Sunderbunds devastating and plundering, and they came close

* The East Indians were subsequently a subject of serious apprehension to parties, who feared that they might, one day like the American colonists, rebel against the English. Even Lord Valentine, as late as 1803, entertained those fears.

to Calcutta. As early as 1717, they carried off 1,700 men, women and children from the Sunderbunds, and sold them as slaves in Arrakan at the rate of from 20 to 70 Rupees a head. Hence three-fourths of the inhabitants of Arrakan were of Sunderbund origin. In 1760, the neighbourhood of Budge Budge and Akra was infested with slave ships belonging to the Portuguese and Mugs. The alarm continued down to 1770, when a chain was run across the river at Mukwa Thanna fort (near the Botanical Garden) to protect the port of Calcutta against those parties. The Mahrattas were hovering round; they took possession of Thanna fort on the site of which Dr. Anderson's house in the Botanical Garden now stands. There are old people in Uttarparah who have heard from their ancestors how the women had to hide themselves in tanks, with *kulsis* over their heads, to escape the Mahratta horse. I have seen old houses in Burdwan built with under-ground cellars to hide their valuables from the Mahratta plunderer. *Bargi hangam* is a well known Bengali proverb, recalling the terror of those days.

Now, as to the important question of the state of *Morals* in Calcutta, it was low among all classes; but the same might have been said of England itself. Enormous fortunes were made by no creditable means, though they were not then adepts in commercial gambling,—there was no joint stockery. The first Engineer of Fort William, Boyer, cheated Government out of 20 lacs, and then entered the service of the Dutch East India Company. *Quarrels*, as in all colonies, were rife, justifying the remark of Voltaire: "to relate the various dissensions of the Europeans in India would make a larger work than the Encyclopædia." As in small communities, gossip abounded and quarrels were the result. Mrs. Fay, about 1770, in her "Letters," describes "ladies' quarrelling on shipboard so as to have left scarcely an entire cap." These disputes were continued on shore, and were naturally shared in by their husbands. Quarrelling gave excitement in dull times; the same still exists occasionally now with passengers round the Cape. There were many quarrels in Council and out of it; the great public quarrel about 1760 was that of Bolst, who published a large quarto volume full of his complaints; he could not, however, have been a great personal sufferer, for he came out to Calcutta in 1759, remained there eight years, and made 9 lacs of Rupees. His aim was to upset the Company's monopoly; had he then succeeded in this object, native improvement, as well as civilisation, would have been thrown back, and India would, as now, be flooded with vagrants and penniless adventurers, lessening British prestige and damaging the Christian name.

Slavery was in vogue: such advertisements as the following appear in the Newspapers: "To be sold two French Hornmen, who dress hairs, shave, and wait at table." "To be sold a fine Caffre boy that understands the business of Butler, Kidmutgar and cooking. Price four hundred Sicca Rupees" "Eloped from the service of his Mistress a slave boy aged twenty years, pretty white or colour of musky. It is requested that after this publication no one will employ him as a writer or in any other capacity." Slavery was an institution of long standing in India; it was greatly encouraged by the Mahomedans; the Dutch were staunch advocates for it, and the Portuguese recruited their ranks chiefly from slave boys whom they carried off in their man-stealing raids in Bengal, but Bengal slaves were treated much better than those in the West Indies or America.

A satirical catechism in *Hickey's Gazette*, published in 1780, seems to hit at the minor morals of the day in Calcutta thus:—

What is commerce?
Gambling.
What is the most cardinal virtue?
Riches.
What's the Amor Patriæ?
Amor Sui.
What is fraud?
Detection.
What is beauty?
Paint.
What is punctuality?
An observance of the appointments of duelling and intriguing.
What is gentility?
Extravagance.
What are public taxes?
Pack saddles.
Who are the people? Nobody.

The papers of that day refer to swarms of French cooks, French doctors, dancing masters, priests, fiddlers, tooth-drawers, frizeurs and toad-eaters infesting Calcutta.

Lawyers are referred to as being so poorly off as to be compelled to disband their zenanas. It is a fact that, down to the early part of this century, zenanas were built in almost every European compound, while concubinage was defended in public and in the

press* Lawyers were not in much odour. The authorities were frequently in collision with them, as they would have everything done agreeable to the statutes; and, like mercantile men, they were under a kind of ban as being out of the service.

A Calcutta paper gives the following epitaph on one.

God works wonders now and then,
Here lies a lawyer and an honest man.

Answered.

This is a mere law quibble, not a wonder,
Here lies a lawyer and his client under.

"The attornies of Calcutta may be said to be to lawyers what apothecaries are to physicians, only that they do not deal in *scruples.*"

Lotteries were the order of the day: large houses fetching 1,000 Rs. monthly rent were sold by lottery tickets of 600 Rs. each; also garden houses, a Howrah house is put up to lottery, "situate on the bank of the river where the bore has no effect." The Harmonic house, a celebrated Tavern, was put up to auction by lottery in 1780, and won by the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Hyde. A garden house in Entally was raffled in 1781 for 6,000 Rupees; prize tickets 75 Rs. each. Some of the best roads in Calcutta were subsequently made by the sale of lottery tickets.

Luxury, wealth and idleness produced the natural results. There is, however, another side to the shield. Old Calcutta was noted for its princely *hospitality*,—"every house was a temple dedicated to hospitality"; a guest was a blessing in the stagnant life of the Ditch; rents were cheap; a whole sheep cost but two rupees; hence it is not surprising there were few hotels; one of the first was in 1780 kept by Sir E. Impey's late steward. In the advertisement, it is stated, "turtles dressed, gentlemen boarded and families supplied with pastry." Mr. Rushton at the same time opened for *gentlemen*

* We know not when that phrase was introduced by spinster husband-hunters respecting young civilians "worth £300 a year dead or alive;" but it was practised at an early period last century, and the press teemed with comments on it. India was a marriage mart, and fancy articles auctioned off fetched a very high price.

A satirical poem in 1813, called the "Anglo-Indian," thus describes some of the ladies imported:

Pale faded stuffs, by time grown faint
Will brighten up through art;
A Britain gives their faces paint,
For sale at India's mart.

Marriages must have been expensive affairs, when a chaplain's fee was 16 or 20 Gold Mohurs; in fact, physic, law and divinity in those days yielded a mine of wealth.

a tavern in RADHABAZAR. Few gentlemen now would like to live in Radhabazar!

Calcutta was equally famed for its liberal *subscriptions*—Mrs. Kindersley, in her travels 1760-68, observes: "There is no part of the world where people part with their money to assist each other so freely as the English in India." The Anglo-Indians have ever maintained that character.

With regard to the treatment of Natives by Europeans, though it is said that Job Charnock, the first Governor of Calcutta, used while at dinner to have delinquents flogged that he might satiate himself with their cries, (he had himself been scourged and imprisoned by the Nawab) yet the treatment of natives by the authorities was generally kind and considerate. The Court of Directors was very severe on any parties convicted of treating them badly, though there was a practice enforced in parts of the country, that if a native, when riding, met an European, he was to dismount until the latter had passed; in Chinsurah, among the Dutch, the natives were obliged not only to do this but to play on their instruments of music when the Governor passed in his palankin through the streets.

An account is given in 1765 in Calcutta of one Radha Tagore, banyan to a solicitor, who, after repeated unsuccessful attempts to get a bill paid by a Member of Council, said the delay would involve heavy law expenses, the Councillor then ordered his peons to seize Tagore, and convey him to the Cutchery, when without any trial he was tied up, severely flogged, and beat on the head with his own slipper "for his insolence." The banyan class to which Tagore belonged were very wealthy and very miserly; they managed the European's money matters as the Kerani did his writing. Their history, as well as that of gomastahs, forms a curious feature in Indian Society.

The natives saw little of their English masters then except in the way of trade or political negotiation. Among the men whose names crop up is that of Omichand, known after 1747. He left charities in all parts of the world; his executors remitted to England £175 to the Magdalen, and £175 to the Foundling hospitals, besides £5,000, the interest of which was to be annually applied to those institutions. Is it so? He also left R. 25,000 towards building a church.

Nundcomar, who was Fauzdar of Hooghly, is too well known to history. Gobardhan Mitter was a famous man in his day, and has given his name to a Ghat.

Nabakissen came forward in Clive's time. Living in an obscure village, Panchgay, near Diamond Harbour, he supplied the English refugees there with provisions in spite of the prohibition of the Nawab, and he brought them valuable information relating to the Nawab's movements. He set an example of public spirit by presenting to Government the old burying ground and the land adjoining it on which St. John's Church is built, (the old magazine had stood on it;) he spent a large sum of money in constructing a road called *Rajah's jangal*, 32 miles long, from Behala to Culpi; he occasionally gave balls, natches and suppers to the English community.

The Nawab of Chitpore was an important personage; he had a fine palace and magnificent gardens near Chitpore, and frequently gave grand parties to the English.

Jaggat Sett is said to have been worth ten crores; the Setts were worth millions; they were the bankers of those days, both to the English and the Nawab, but they soon declined. Two of them met a melancholy end, having been drowned near Monghyr by order of Kasim Ali Khan; the only remnants of the family now are pensioners on the bounty of Government.

The Rajah of Burdwan had great power. It was the insurrection in his country that led to the erection of the Old Fort in 1696; he, in a quarrel with the English about 1755, stopped all their trade in Bengal. The annual produce of his estate amounted probably to 80 lacs.

Young Bengal made his appearance in 1780 in the person of one Raja Ramlochun, who made a visit to an eminent attorney, equipped in boots, buckskin breeches, hunting frock and jockey cap. The Nawab Sadaat Ali came to Calcutta, and is said to have purchased an admiral's uniform, two canonicals, and a pair of wigs. A skit in a newspaper about 1780 says, "the poor oppressed natives here are already providing themselves with bear-skin breeches instead of buckskin; they are, however, prejudiced against the wigs." Another states, "the Juti-wallahs and makers of native shoes in Calcutta are about to petition the Supreme Council against the luxury of the Bengali banyans and Sircars, who keep palkees, phætons and buggies by which shoes, that formerly lasted only from ten to twelve days, last them now as many months."

Feasting Brahmins was common, and lacs upon lacs were spent on it. Much money was spent in processions, which were frequent, and excited great zeal, and at times collisions.

The *Keranchi*, now so despised and nearly extinct, was a fashionable vehicle for native gentlemen; it was an imitation of the old English family coach.

The native houses were nearly all covered with thatch, hence fires were very common, often of an incendiary kind. A cocoanut shell full of fire was covered over with a brick and tied over with a string, two holes being left in the brick that the wind might blow the fire out. About 1780 a fellow was detected at Moorshedabad setting fire to a house by throwing the *ticka* of his *hukah* in the *chuppers;* he was tried, and sentenced to have his left hand and right foot cut off. We find in April 1780, a fire broke out in the Barabazar, which consumed 700 houses; the same month one broke out in the Dhurumtola, which burned every house down between that and the Jaun Bazar; upwards of 20 people were burned to death, with a great number of cattle, sheep and fowls.

Portuguese was the language for servants, and a kind of *lingua franca* in Calcutta; religious services were held in it. Kiernander, the first missionary in Calcutta, baptized in 1769 a Bengali, who is said to have made such proficiency in the Portuguese tongue, that "as a Catechist to the Bengali caste, he was able from the Portuguese to explain the doctrines of Christianity in their own language." Persian was the language of diplomacy and the Courts. In it the English transacted business both with Natives and Armenians. Through his skill in it Nabakissen, from being Clive's Munshi in 1760, rose to great influence and wealth.

Bengali was little known; it was considered the language of fishermen—a poor mongrel dialect unworthy of study. How are times changed! Bolst, so noted in Calcutta quarrels, was one of the first who knew it. Sitting one day as alderman to try a case, he found the complainant profess to translate a document from Bengali. He did it fluently, but Bolst looking over his shoulder, found there was not a word of Bengali, and all the translation was his own invention. In those days many cases like this occurred without there being a Bolst to detect. In 1765, the natives presented a petition to Government to have the English laws translated into Bengali. There were perhaps at that time not a dozen natives in all Calcutta who could understand them in English.

Ramkomal Sen, a native who has evinced considerable taste for antiquarian research, in the valuable preface to his Dictionary, states:—

"The English first visited Bengal about the year 1620. On their arrival at, and first settlement, in Gobindpore in Sootanooty, the natives did not dare

approach them, not being able to understand what they said; business was accordingly transacted by gestures and signs of the body.

"In 1680, the old Fort was erected as a warehouse of the Company, in which many natives of Calcutta were employed. Some years before this, an English man-of-war came up the river and anchored near the Botanic Garden, when the Commanding Officer sent to the *Basákhs*, or *Setts*, then a great family, and employed in supplying piece goods to the English merchants, and requested them to send him a *Dubas* or *Dhobhasia*, a word which in the language of the Coast means a *Sircar*, or one who knows two languages. This class of men had proved themselves very useful to the English at Madras. The *Basákhs*, who were weavers by caste, were known to the English Merchants long before this; for they had an extensive manufacture of Gurrah cloths, which they sold to the Company. They had several *Dhobas*, or washermen in their employ. The *Basákhs* were surprised at the request; and did not comprehend what the English Commander required of them. At length the whole of their family assembled, and held a consultation, as to what was to be done, when after a great deal of discussion one of the wisest men in the family said that he believed the Naval Officer wanted a *Dhoba* to wash their wearing apparel. They proposed therefore to send one of their washermen named ————, but the poor man did not readily consent to go, and his family was much grieved. At last he was prevailed upon to undertake the enterprise, which was then considered as an expedition to the north pole. It was the custom of the Hindoos never to approach a superior with empty hands, but to take something in the shape of a nuzzar or present; a practice which has ever been much in use, particularly among the ship sircars. Such nuzzars consist of plantains, pumplenusses and sugarcandy. A present like this the *Dhoba* took with him to offer to the Naval Commander. This extraordinarily brave man went in a little boat abreast of the man-of-war, which received him with a salute. He was taken upon deck and received by the officers in a manner quite novel, such as he had never experienced before. After the usual ceremonies, the man was discharged with bags of gold and other precious articles, and afterwards continued one of the principal native servants of the Company for many years.

"The Dhoba by frequent intercourse with the English learned their language, in about the same perfection as the Lalbazar bearers, who are frequently to be seen surrounding the sailors when they land. He may be considered the first English scholar among the natives of Calcutta.

"In 1774 the Supreme Court was established here, and from this period a knowledge of the English language appeared to be desirable and necessary. In tracing the progress made, it appears that a Brahmin named *Rámrám Misra* was the first who made any considerable progress in the English language, but it is not known how he learnt it, or by whom he was taught. He himself taught several Baboos and amongst them *Ramnarain Misra*, a clerk to an attorney of the Supreme Court, who was considered to be a scholar and a great lawyer into the bargain, for he could draw up petitions and knew the forms and practice of the pernicious system of law which has ruined almost every family of note in Calcutta who were subject to its jurisdiction. By it he made his fortune, there not being his equal at the time. He afterwards kept a school, in which he taught a number of Hindoo youth, and received from them a monthly fee of from Rs. 4 to 16 each. Before his time, however, there was another individual named *Anandiram Doss*, who knew a still greater number of English words than *Ramnarain*. This man had a vocabulary or collection of words which was considered a treasure of English knowledge, and a number

of young Hindoos used to attend daily upon him for hours and to wait his pleasure and convenience to get some scraps from his book. This pious philanthropist used to give out five or six words every day for their study."

How are the mighty fallen! Nearly allied in race and feeling to the natives are the Portuguese. The first European conquerors in India, how degenerate at the time when the English had erected their fort in Calcutta in 1680! Portuguese prestige had given way to Dutch and French. Hooghly, with its fort, was their only possession left, and the descendants of Albuiquerque resorted to piracy. They had desolated the Sunderbunds, and carried on the slave trade with a high hand; they have left few traces in last century, though their language was commonly spoken, and was the medium of intercourse with servants. The words *caste* and *compound* are the few relics left of the Portuguese.

The Portuguese were employed by the English as Artillerymen previous to 1751, and called *topas*, from *top* a gun. They are described as "a black degenerate offspring of the ancient Portuguese, not to be depended on, not one in ten of whom was fit to be a soldier." Lord Valentia in 1805, referring to the profusion of dishes on the dinner tables, complains "they were to the no small satisfaction of birds and beasts of prey, for the lower orders of the Portuguese, to whom alone they would be serviceable, cannot consume the whole."

A glance now at a few classes of Society.

Young Civilians had to rough it; they had not then their Fort-William College, where champagne was drunk *a là discretion*, and when racing and gambling were the occupations. As the palankin last century was the vehicle of honor, there was an order of the Court of Directors about 1757, complaining of the luxurious habits of their junior servants, and, as an instance, that they went to office in a palankin. Its use was consequently prohibited, and only allowed subsequently as a great favor to go to office in, in the hot weather and rains. The palankin was arched, and the Dutch Governor at Chinsurah used to sit in a chair in his, as did some in Calcutta. We find that in 1767, two hundred ryots fell prostrate before the Governor of Calcutta's palki, to present a petition to be allowed to make salt.

The *Griff*, or new arrival, was a constant subject of ridicule last century in the Calcutta press, particularly the king's officers, who were thorough griffs as well as old griffs.

The *old Indian* came in for his share; the man who had forgotten Europe, and sat down for life engrossed with his curries and zenanas.

Tailors made then as now large profits; one that came out in 1763, after ten years' residence, gave his friends a dinner served on plate, and shortly after retired to Europe with a fortune of two lacs of rupees; milliners were still more fortunate, to the dismay of husbands, who were observed to turn pale as ashes on the bare mention of their wives being seen to enter milliner's shops. Four master tailors advertise in 1780, that as they have to pay the merchants in sicca rupees so they must be paid in the same.

Confectioners and watchmakers were at an early period in Calcutta, so were pawn-brokers and auctioneers. The auction shops of Calcutta were famous rendezvous for killing time. Freemasons were established in Calcutta in 1728. In 1732, the Provincial Grand Master sent from his Lodge at Bengal, for the use of the Grand Lodge of England, a chest of the best arrack. In 1755, Roger Drake was elected Provincial Grand Master, but it is to be hoped that on hearing of his cowardly conduct in Calcutta, they deposed him.

The Armenians came to India, some by the Persian Gulph, others by Khorasan, Candahar, and Kabul to Delhi. They were among the earliest settlers, coming gradually from Guzerat and Surat to Benares and Behar. They settled in Chinsurah soon after the Dutch settlement of 1625. On the foundation of Calcutta, 1690, the Armenians, in common with the Portuguese, accepted the invitation of the Governor Charnock, to settle there, and flourished, so that in 1757 they received as compensation for their losses seven lacs of rupees; they were pioneers in the Central Asia trade, which has yet a great future before it.

The *Greeks*, who are now merchant princes, came to Calcutta about 1750. Their church was erected in consequence of a vow that Argyrea, a Greek Merchant made, when overtaken by a violent gale,—that if preserved, he would found a Greek Church in Calcutta. Warren Hastings headed the subscription to it with Rs. 2,000.

The *Dutch* were very severe towards natives, the same in Bengal as in Batavia. It is told of the Dutch fiscal at Chinsurah, that on finding any fault with his banyan, he used to fine him Rs. 20 or 30, and if he did not pay the money at once, he was tied up and whipped until it was paid.

The Dutch ladies at Chinsurah are represented as fond of parties and dancing; lolling on a sofa in the morning, sleeping in the after-noon, and up half the night. They figured often in the Fancy Balls given at Chinsurah, which used to be attended by the English from Calcutta, and by the French from Chandernagore, in their palankins.

Let us next take a view of the houses. From an early period, as soon as the English could live securely away from their Fort, they began to build houses in the centre of spacious gardens; ground was cheap, and domestic seclusion was pleasant. Chowringhee was then out of town in the woods, and the first move to build garden houses was in that direction; which spread gradually as the names of streets in Chowringhee indicate. Sir W. Jones lived as far down as Garden Reach, and used to walk every day to the Supreme Court. Sir R. Chambers, the Oriental Scholar, took up his quarters at Bhowanipore, where he was serenaded at night by the tigers' howl. General Dickinson lived out at Dakhinessur. The Dum-Dum and Baraset roads are referred to in 1747 and in 1757; when the Governor of Calcutta used occasionally to spend a few days at Baraset. Some were fond, even before that period, of living out of town. Job Charnock, as early as 1690, had a country bungalow at Barrackpore; his name is perpetuated in the term Chanak applied by natives to Barrackpore.

When Lord Teignmouth arrived at Calcutta in 1769, not more than three houses were furnished with venetians or glass windows; solid shutters or rattans like those used for the bottom of chairs were in vogue. The houses were generally of one story, though raised with steps to them; the doors and windows were small to keep out the heat; there were few verandahs, they had arched windows instead; the furniture was scant as it was dear, and it was thought to harbor snakes and vermin. The houses were approached by a flight of steps with great projecting portions, or surrounded by colonnades or arcades.

In 1780, we find there were garden houses in Balligunge, Russapagla, Baitakhanah, Alipore, opposite Thannah Fort, at Dakhinessur beyond Baranagar, Mirzapore, and at Sukhsaugor near Hooghly. Mr. Stofts had a plantation, where he used to receive Warren Hastings. We have an account of Warren Hastings on his return with his lady receiving a salute of 21 guns from the Dutch fort at Chinsurah. Hastings had a bungalow at Birkul below Kedgeree, where he

occasionally entertained his friends, and enjoyed the sea breezes. Baraset was the scene of festive parties about 1780.

Excursions were occasionally made to Fulta, which then had a fine hotel. The Dutch ships remained there. River trips were made to Chandernagore and to Bandel, called the Montpellier of India, noted for its gaiety and debauchery; to Baranagore, a gay place, the Dutch halfway house between Fulta and Chinsurah. Gurretti, the French Versailles, attracted many by its gardens, in which 120 carriages have been on the occasion of gay parties. Belvidere, in 1770, was occupied by Governor Cartier, who used to give parties there, his friends riding to the place, as there was no carriage road.

As to the mental food of Calcutta, there was a public *Library* in the old Fort as early as 1770; new books were supplied once a year. A Mr. Andrew, who had a circulating library, complains in 1780 of the loss he sustained owing to "gentlemen going away, and in their hurry not recollecting their being subscribers to the library, or having any books belonging thereto." In those days books only came once a year from England; printing charges were 500 per cent. higher than now: we have seen a book of 142 pp. 12mo. printed in Calcutta 1803, and sold to non-subscribers at Rs. 24 a copy.

Hickey's Gazette started in 1780 as an "antibilious specific," but it grew so scurrilous that, on November 14th, 1780, appeared an order of Government prohibiting its circulation through the channel of the General Post Office on account of its lately having been found to contain several improper paragraphs tending to vilify private characters, and to disturb the peace of the settlement. Hickey employed 20 hurkarras to distribute his paper, and stated he would persist in his opposition to Government, though he should have to compose ballads and sell them through the streets of Calcutta as Homer did. His career ended in a jail, after long battling it out. The Government soon after started a *Gazette*; there was another called the *Monitorial Gazette*. Mr. Kiernander, a Missionary, in 1780, had a printing press.

As to education, there were few native schools except on the Gurumahashay system. Mr. Hodges, about 1780, advertises a Government school near the Armenian Church for teaching reading, writing and needle work. Another advertises "a boy's boarding school beyond Chitpore Bridge, opposite the avenue leading to the Nawab's garden, reading, writing and arithmetic taught Rs. 50 monthly, at the master's table, at a separate one Rs. 30, he does not intend to take more than 14 boys unless he gets an assistant." In 1781, Mr.

Griffith has a boarding school in his garden house near the Baitokhanah, where "young gentlemen are genteelly boarded, tenderly treated and expeditiously taught," but the moral tone of these schools was generally very low.

We have reached the limits we assigned to this article, which merely *glances* at some of the leading points regarding Calcutta. There are various other branches of the subject that afford ample scope, such as the Jews of Calcutta, (is it true they had to yield the palm in cleverness and acuteness in business matters to the Bengali?)—the Greeks—the East Indians—the Moguls, their numbers and social position last century—the Mussulmans, their condition last century contrasted with this,—the Parsees—the Sikhs—the Free Masons—the Chinese—the Adventurer or Interloper.

I now conclude with proposing some topics which, as supplemental to the paper, I hope may elicit answers for our Association from our Native friends.

In a conversation I had with the late Professor Wilson, 20 years ago, he urged on me to get something done towards preserving the traditions and reminiscences of old native families in Calcutta; little has been done towards this.*

The *origin of the names of streets.* In the present American rage for modernizing names it is important to preserve this. The names of a variety of individuals and circumstances are embalmed in these; thus Govindram Mitre's Ghat recalls the name and history of the millionaire of last century,—Cossitollah, the butchers of last century.

Pundits, Kathaks, Gurus, Kabirajes, Yogis, Witches, their social position, emoluments, knowledge, how different from the present time.

The *police,* dakaity and criminal classes—the life of a *dakait.*

The habit of *drinking* spirits—its rise and progress.

Bara, China and Dhuramtola *bazars,* their rise and progress.

Anecdotes illustrative of *Jatras, Satis, Sldvery, Banyans, Caste, Shraddhas, Pujas,* the *Charak* human sacrifices, *Servants,*—were they better treated or better paid than now?—The life of a Khansamah. *Shroffs, Banyans, Mahajans,* their past position.

The Bengali language and literature, anecdotes illustrative of.

The Mahomedans, their social position last century.

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* I hail with pleasure the appearance of three recent works on this subject, a brief *account of the Tagore family*—the *life of Ramdulal Dey* the Bengali Millionaire, and Sketch of *Raja Radhakant Deva.*

The PRESIDENT expressed his great regret that the lateness of the hour had prevented Mr. Long from reading more than a fraction of his paper, and rendered it quite impossible for him, the President, to invite discussion. He thought that the thanks of the Association were due to Mr. Long for bringing this topic under its consideration. Although Calcutta was young, as the age of cities is reckoned, still it had witnessed numerous historical events of vast importance; and its own development was but the index of the rise and progress of the now mighty empire of India. Side by side with this had gone on social changes, which could not fail to command the interest of all native residents of this Province. Surely there must be material in the family archives of Hindu and Mahomedan gentlemen, which would prove most valuable to the historian and most interesting to the public if it could be brought to light. And the stirring incidents of a time, not long past, might receive elucidation and description from persons, scarcely removed from the position of eye witnesses of what they could relate. He urged upon the members of the Association to follow out the suggestions of Mr. Long and bring in to the common store all the scattered elements of tradition and observation which lay within their reach.

TOPOGRAPHY

OF THE

ISLAND OF KARANJAH

BY

J. N. MENDONÇA, G. G. M. C.,

(LATE SUB-ASSISTANT SURGEON IN CHARGE OF MRS. PASCOA DE SOUZA'S DISPENSARY AT OORUN)

QX. 4 - 43

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TO

G. C. M. BIRDWOOD, Esq., M. D,

&c. &c. &c.

IN TOKEN OF RESPECT AND GRATITUDE,

THESE LINES

are dedicated

BY HIS FORMER PUPIL

THE AUTHOR.

TOPOGRAPHY

OF THE

ISLAND OF KARANJAH.

Introduction.—A small and out-of-the-way Island like Karanjah, consisting as it does of little more than an assemblage of fishing villages and in which a residence of two years in the service of Government involved a dreary ordeal of isolation and solitude, the deliverance from which was purchased at the sacrifice of that service and all its prospects, is far from being an inviting theme either for the exercise of a literary cacoethos or for the gratification of an honourable aspiration to fame. Motives of this kind therefore, did not stimulate me to the unwilling task,—unwilling because the present production was brought forth only under the pressure of the departmental rules applicable to my charge as late Sub-Assistant Surgeon to Mrs. Pascoa de Souza's Dispensary. In obedience to these rules and in compliance with an official duty, the following topography was originally submitted to the Principal Inspector General

Medical Department Bombay, and in a condensed form, I have now ventured to thrust it on the attention of the public. To me, there was always something very encouraging in the contemplation that it was the munificence and liberality of a Portuguese lady, the wife of the late Mr. Manoel de Souza Mamlutdar of Salsette, that gave birth to the Dispensary of which I held charge, and which, while fulfilling its humane objects in the alleviation of the suffering poor and in the performance of the various collateral functions to which such institutions are subservient, served in a great measure to redeem the Portuguese name from the reproach which the long indifference of the class in matters of public benefaction, had cast at it. Considerations like these may certainly have softened the unattractiveness of my task and stimulated me to write the present essay. But they offer no explanation as to why I should thus seek to redeem it from the official obscurity to which it was originally destined, and why in doing so, I should throw myself upon the forbearance and indulgence of the public. But when it is considered that, insignificant as Karanjah appears to be, the Government of Bombay had more than once contemplated it as an eligible site for the building of a jail,—that in carrying out the defence-works of the harbour a new fort is to be eventually erected at Karanjah,—that

abundant and valuable materials for the various public works in Bombay have for some time past, been drawn from that place,—and lastly, that twice it formed the subject of the geological researches of the late Dr. H. J. Carter of Bombay,—when all this is considered, I trust I have offered an explanation and an apology for attempting to draw attention to a place which has been somewhat unduly and undeservedly neglected. The narrative will be found somewhat dry I confess, but I flatter myself nevertheless, that upon such poor beginnings often rest whatever economic and material progress may be made in previously neglected or unknown localities.

Physical Features.—Karanjah or Karinjah as it is called, is a small Island situated to the south-east of Bombay in latitude 18° 15' and longitude 73° 2'. Viewed from Bombay, it looks like two small hills placed side by side and as if forming part of that range of hills that constitute the western boundary of the continent of India, but being in reality separated from the mainland on the south, by an arm of the sea, and on the east, by a long and winding creek running through an extensive marsh that lies on that side of the island. The whole Island is four miles long from North to South and about 2 miles broad from East to West. It consists chiefly of two irregular hills with an interven-

ing plain. The two hills are named in a short notice of the Island in Thornton's Gazetteer, the Great and Little Karanjah Hill respectively. The Little Hill is on the north side of the island, irregular in outline, rocky and barren, presenting nothing remarkable except as being the site of two Government bungalows, one of which belongs to the Collector of Tanna and the other to the Customs Department. The Great Hill is both higher and longer, with very steep sides, and presents a more austere aspect. On its very summit, are the ruins of two Mahratta forts, in the centre of one of which, is a Portuguese Church also in ruins. A long and winding flight of steps built by these early possessors of the island, leads to one of these forts, and although at the present day, indicating very markedly the ravages of time, serves to render access to the hill comparatively easy.

The following short extract from the article in Thornton's Gazetteer above alluded to, offers us an insight into its early history and the political changes it has undergone. "Karanjah was an early possession of the Portuguese, and in 1661 when Bombay was ceded as part of the dowry of the Infanta of Portugal on her marriage with Charles II. was retained, notwithstanding the protest of the English authorities that its retention was a violation of the treaty.

The Portuguese moreover availed themselves of its possession to give every possible annoyance to the settlement of Bombay. It soon after, in 1683 fell into the hands of Sambajee the Mahratta chief. In 1774 it was taken by the English and formally ceded by the Mahratta Government in 1775, the cession being confirmed by an additional clause in the treaty of Poorunder."

Revenue.—Insignificant as the place certainly is, this character is, I believe, sufficiently redeemed by two very important articles of trade exported from it, viz. salt and the mowrah liquor, the export duty on which is said to yield to Government a total annual revenue of sixteen lacs of Rupees. Considered by itself or relatively with the amount of revenue derived from all the other talookas under the Tanna Collectorate, Government have certainly much more reason to be pleased with the island than either myself or any body else who may have had occasion to reside in it for any length of time.

Topographical Division.—The island may be divided into three principal parts or villages, viz. *Mora or Carpusha, Qorin* and *Karanjah*, the first and last being situated at the northern and southern extremity of the island respectively, and the second in the plain between the Great and Little hills—all three, however

lying almost in a straight line on the eastern aspect of the island. The minor villages of Nagaum and Moolekhund situated on the western and eastern sides respectively, do not call for more than a passing allusion. The first three however, may be described a little in detail.

Mora or Carpusha is situated at the northern extremity of the little hill, which is also the northern extremity of the island. It is chiefly a fishing village and consists of a number of low ill-built thatched huts situated along a rocky and muddy beach. Mora may be considered the harbour or chief bunder of Karanjah, where passengers to and from Bombay embark and disembark, and where the chief import and export trade, such as there is, is carried on, in consequence of which the Custom House Office is located here. But Mora is chiefly remarkable as the seat of the only objects of any importance in the island viz. the Distilleries of mowrah liquor, of which there are no less than nineteen. These distilleries are important not only in a commercial point of view, but also from the fact that the range of chunam-built and tiled buildings occupied by them with their tall white chimneys, serve by contrast greatly to relieve the unsightliness of the surrounding huts, and upon the whole, give the place when viewed from a distance on a clear day, rather a

picturesque appearance. The distilleries will be further noticed presently.

Ooran or Carpusha is the chief, most important and most central part of the island, and may be considered as the town. It is somewhat curtly described in Thornton's Gazetteer as a "small assemblage of low ill built houses situated near a Tank." Whether the writer speaks from personal observation or from hearsay, it is difficult to imagine, but the fact is, that Oorun is a much larger and more important place than would appear from the above description. It is about half a mile in extent, the houses are more numerous, large, some of them well-built and two or three storied. It is the residence of the better class of the inhabitants such as Merchants, Furzendars, Carkoons and of the Fouzdar, Mahalkurree, Sir Carkoon &c. It contains a beautiful Catholic Church rebuilt by the late Mr. Manoel de Souza, and another at a distance of a few yards in ruins; also, the Medical Dispensary, the Government Maharatti School and the Market. Near it and situated on the southern extremity of the Little hill, are the two Government Bungalows referred to. Not many years ago, Oorun possessed a Moonsiff's Court but it was abolished in 1861, its functions being delegated to the Court at Panwell.

Karanjah is the village situated at the south-

ern extremity of the island. Like Mora it is a fishing village but unlike it, contains a few decent houses of Banian Merchants.

Ferry.—A regular ferry runs daily between Bombay and Mora and another beween the Karanjah village and Rewus, Nagotna, Penn, and other places to the south of the island, which thus forms a link between the two lines of ferries running to and from each end of it in opposite directions, and which has therefore to be traversed by the passengers to and from the above places. At one time of the year namely, before and after the monsoons, the number of people thus passing through Karanjah daily is very great indeed. The ferry-boats are in consequence exceedingly crowded. Indeed, on one occasion I got the ferry contractor fined 15 Rupees for crowding nearly two hundred persons in one boat (there are three of them) for one trip alone, contrary to the terms of his contract.

Salt-pans.—On the eastern side of the island and intersected by a long and winding creek with its numerous branches, is an extensive marsh, which has been converted into salt-pans of vast extent. For miles and miles together the eye can follow these stupendous works until they are, as it were, lost in that range of hills which bounds the Deccan. On a moon-light night particularly, while looking on the salt-

pans from the Collector's bungalow, the prospect is really grand and beautiful. The glittering moon-beams playing upon the creek and displaying a dazzling surface of silver,—the majestic ghauts at a distance towering their lofty heads into the clear sky,—the intervening marshy plain marked out in beautiful squares surmounted at intervals by innumerable heaps of salt like so many white pyramids for miles together and encircled here and there by numerous branches of the winding creek like so many bright silvery bands,—all these conspire to produce an effect truly enchanting and lovely. The construction of these salt-pans has necessarily broken up the course of the creek into various smaller branches. One large arm of it however, runs more or less straight from Mora to Oorun, so that at high tide a boat can come up direct to the latter place. At low water, portions of the creek run dry, thus exposing the Mangrove bushes that grow thick at various parts of it.

Salt-Marshes and Malaria.—The influence of salt-marshes in the generation of malaria and consequently of malarious fever, has ever been a subject of considerable interest to the scientific observer. The experience of others have however hitherto rather tended to the belief that salt-marshes do not generate malaria—a belief

fully supported by the result of my own observations.

The *Distilleries* at Mora to which I have above alluded, are owned and conducted entirely by Parsees. Mowrah or Bewrah is the liquor derived from the Mowrah which is the fruit of the *Bassia Latifolia*. It is obtained by the ordinary process of distillation, which is too well known to require detailed description. These distilleries however involve important sanitary relations and viewed from this light, they cannot be characterized otherwise than an intolerable nuisance, a state of things arising from the dregs or refuse of the Mowrah fruit left behind after the distillation of the liquor. These dregs, the aggregate quantity of which from the various distilleries is something enormous, and which is all cast about along the beach and in gutters along the pathway, possess such a peculiarly sickening and horrible smell that it must be a strong stomach that will resist its action, and certainly whoever smells it once, will never forget it. When the distilleries have been recently at work, actually the whole village of Mora becomes as it were enveloped, in these sickening mowrah exhalations. But the effect becomes at times greatly heightened, when these dregs which had been carried away into the sea for many days, are washed up at each spring

tide and left on the beach in a high state of putrefaction.

The Mowrah Dregs.—The disposal of these mowrah dregs does not appear to have been hitherto effectually provided for. One large open drain leads from each distillery into the sea. Into these gutters, the dregs are emptied and are thus carried, some only half way down and others into the sea, to be however washed back at the next spring tide. Various plans have from time to time been under consideration with the view of remedying this nuisance, but the Tannah wiseacres are to this day far from having discovered the philosophers stone. The last measure of the kind proposed to be carried out, is to build larger closed drains and to raise the ground in front of the distilleries some five or six feet for some distance towards the sea, so as to offer a barrier against the dregs being washed up too near the village. The advantage of this arrangement consisting only in keeping off the dregs only a few yards further, it cannot have the least influence in checking the generation and spread of the sickening exhalation.

Their influence on health.—There is, however no reliable means of ascertaining as to how far the health of the inhabitants is affected by this highly offensive stench. That the influence of habit and the close vicinity of the sea may in some degree, counteract its effects, is undoubted,

but that there is relatively much more sickness in the place than actually comes under observation, is also highly probable.

Curiously enough, the cattle in the neighbourhood feed lustily on these mowrah dregs, and are remarkably fatter and plumper than those of any other part of the island. I can easily imagine how small portions of the mucilaginous and saccharine matter in the mowrah fruit which pass more or less unfermented in these dregs, should thus afford to the cattle an abundant and valuable source of nutriment which is apparently far from being neglected by the inhabitants.

Roads.—There is but one long and continuous road along the eastern side of the island from one end of it to the other. Bad and imperfectly built as the roads in the Mofussil generally are, this is perhaps one of its worst specimens. During the fair season it is tolerable, but in the monsoons, it is positively unsafe at some parts. The unscrupulousness of contractors and the connivance of supervising authorities, will never permit of its being improved up to the value of the money annually allotted to its repair.

Houses.—These do not call for any special comment. With the exception of the Government bungalows and the country residency of the late Mr. M. d'Souza, they are of the ordinary class of native architecture, varying from

the mud and thatched huts of the fisherman and the coonbie, to the brick or stone-built, tiled, and generally one or two storied houses of the Banian and Mussulman shop-keepers and merchants. Of course, as in the case of all structures raised by the less educated class of natives, they are marked by a total disregard for the requirements of ventilation and cleanliness.

Water-supply.—The water here is generally speaking good and wholesome, and an ample supply is provided in the numerous tanks, ponds, wells and springs scattered about the island. There are three principal tanks of large size,—two of them regularly built, one of the latter being situated along the roadside about half way between Mora and Oorun and the other between the latter and Karanjah. Both contain fresh drinkable water. The third and largest, being about quarter of a mile in circumferrence, is in Oorun, and is evidently the one referred to in Thornton's Gazetteer. This tank is full of weed and almost covered with the kummul leaves *(Nelumbium speciosum)* and a species of water convolvulus *(Ipomœa Reptans)*, and from its comparatively large size is the favourite resort of wild ducks in the cold season. The water is, however, far from being clean. Not only the whole of the Hindoo population perform their daily ablutions in it, but clothes and every

species of cattle are washed in it all day long; and yet the water is used for drinking purposes by the poorer classes! Besides these regularly built tanks, there are numerous ponds and private wells in various parts, which contain water for many months after the rains. But the best kind of water obtainable here, is from springs, of which there are two principal ones on the hills. On the little hill not far from the Collector's bungalow there is a pretty copious and constant stream which runs into and is collected in a reservoir built for the purpose some years ago, by the late Mr. Richard Spooner Commissioner of Customs in Bombay. On the great hill, in a narrow ravine there is a remarkably regular excavation into a rock in the shape of a small square room probably the work of the Mahrattas, with a narrow entrance guarded by some chunam work which is now destroyed. From the roof of this chamber there is a constant and continuous trickling of water which collects at the bottom, which is about three or four feet deep. The water is clear and most wholesome. There is also on the same hill by the side of the old church, a closed well or reservoir built by the Portuguese and which I have reason to believe is connected with a large spring. It contains excellent water. From none of these latter sources, however, is the

water extensively used in consequence of the great trouble of obtaining it.

The *geology* of the island presents the general features common to Western India. The following extracts from a paper by Dr. H. J. Carter published in the journal of the B. B. of the Royal Asiatic Society for January 1862, give some idea of its general geological character. "This Island," says Dr. Carter "is composed of trap, being a portion of the great beds of Western India enfiladed by dykes of black-basalt and thrown up into two small mountains, called respectively the Great and Little Carinja." "The beds of trap, of which the mountains are composed, vary in structure and density. They are all more or less greenish or bluish when undecomposed, and more or less amygdaloidal; but there is one in particular that varies in thickness under fifty (?) feet, which is more solid than the rest, and may be seen projecting out from the scarped side of the mountains about a third way up from the base of Great Carinja, but of course varying in position with the elevation of the beds among which it lies. It is from this bed that building-stone must be expected, and near the northern end of the island there are two insignificant Kave-Temples in it: while it has been resorted to largely in the island of Elephanta for this purpose, as the

celebrated Sivite Kave-Temple in it here testify."

For further details I must refer the reader to the excellent paper from which the above is quoted.

The *Soil* in the plains and low situations is generally speaking fertile, and except on the top and sides of the hills, vegetation is every where abundant and vigorous. It is remarkable by the way that the summit of the Great Hill, unlike that of the Little Hill, is full of very thick and luxuriant vegetation, whereas its sides are perfectly barren. It is therefore in the highest degree probable that this remarkably abundant vegetation along the summit of the hill, is the remains of a high degree of cultivation received in those olden times when, from the presence of the two forts with its church, temples, houses, tanks and springs, it is natural to suppose, it must have been tolerably well populated.

The *Botany* of the Island presents nothing peculiar. Besides crops of rice, bajree &c., all the ordinary trees common in these parts, exist in abundance. Those requiring any special mention are the Teak (*Tectona Grandis*) the Sissoo (*Dalbergia Latifolia*) which are pretty common, and also the *Andansonia Digitata* of which there is a very large number and which with its disproportionately thick stem some of them 8 or

10 feet in circumference presents a singularly ludicrous appearance and "will always be a curious object to an European" (inquire *Bombay Flora* by Dalzell and Gibson). I may also mention that the ordinary succulent vegetable such as the white gourd (*Lagenaria vulgaris*) the cucumber (*Cucumis Sativus*) the snake-gourd (*Trichosanthes Anguina*) the Benda (*Abelmoschus Esculentus*) the Brinjal (*Solanum melongena*) and several others are grown in great abundance chiefly to supply the Bombay market.

The *market* or Bazaar here is miserably poor. With the exception of rice and fish, almost every article of daily consumption is imported from Bombay and is consequently somewhat dearer. Fish of course is abundant and cheap but as by far the greatest quantity is taken to the Bombay market, such portions only as cannot be taken there, find their way into this bazaar. As regards meat, occasionally, and generally on Sundays and holidays, two or three emaciated sickly goats and sheep are slaughtered and their flesh sold as *Mutton*. The least that can be said of it is, that in 9 cases out of 10, it is unfit for the food of man. Nevertheless as necessity has no law, the poorer classes consume it and consider it a great luxury besides. Poultry is scanty and dear, owing to its constant exportation to

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Bombay by certain people who have established a sort of monopoly of the trade.

Population.—The island of Karanjah and the Oorun Talooka are two different things. Under the latter head are included besides Karanjah, the islands of Elephanta, Hogg-Island, Apta and other little adjacent islets. The population of the whole Talooka according to a census taken in 1851 amounts to 13,969.—But in the Island of Karanjah itself, it may computed roughly at 5000 souls. They consist of Hindoos, Musulmans, Parsees and Portuguese or Native Christians.

The various divisions and sub-divisions into which the Hindus are classed and their respective manners, occupations and habits are too well known to require description in this place. The same remarks apply to the Mussulmans and Parsees. The Portuguese or Native Christians however, form but a small proportion of the entire population, their total number being about 200 male, female, and children. The great majority of them are agriculturists and toddy-drawers and from their idle and dissipated habits are at this day with scarcely any exception a poor and indigent class. That the Christian population of the Island must have been considerable at one time, is more than certain from the fact of there existing to this day, the ruins

of four churches the remnants of the piety and religious zeal of the Portuguese nation, and that the same population was at one time in a flourishing condition, is evident from the extensive lands and estates which once belonged to them but which have now passed into other hands.

It may however be mentioned *en passant* that the present parish Church dedicated to our Lady of Purification was re-built by the late Mr. M. de Souza. It is now presided over by a Priest under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Goa. The annual feast of the Patron Saint which takes place in February of each year and which is generally solemnized by some member of the Souza family, affords occasion for a very pleasant excursion to a goodly party of Portuguese from Bombay.

Education.—There is but one Government Mahrattee school in Oorun, in which the course of study comprises reading, writing and arithmetic. The pupil having acquired a degree of proficiency in these branches, sufficient to enable them to obtain an employment as a carkoon or clerk, or to keep the accounts of his shop, he generally leaves the school, and probably the school itself can hardly go beyond this point. The Mussulmans have however their own private schools in which their male and female children are principally taught to read the Koran, and

apparently the subject is held in high estimation from the fact of there being in a small community like this, no less than 5 or 6 schools of the kind presided over by a class of teachers called Moolhas. The education of the Portuguese or native Christian is, as every where else, utterly neglected and it is lamentable to contemplate that the subject has never attracted the attention of any of the Priests who have successively been in charge of the Church to which I have already alluded.

Commerce.—The chief articles of export are those which have been already incidentally referred to viz. salt and mowrah liquor. The rest are mere trifles, as also are the articles imported into the Island, being chiefly necessaries of life, besides the mowrah fruit which comes from Surat, Broach and other places, and a large quantity of firewood required for the use of the distilleries.

Prevailing diseases.—On this head there is nothing special or peculiar in respect to this Island, except that Leprosy has long been considered to be particularly common here, an opinion founded upon the fact that proportionately a large number of leprous patients admitted into the J. J. Hospital and the Dhurumshalla at Bombay, are Natives of this place. My experience on this head does not enable me to ex-

press a positive opinion either way. But supposing the theory which ascribes the generation of leprosy to an excessive use of fish to be true, one can easily imagine *a priori* why in a fishing village like this where some classes of people use fish invariably and probably not in the freshest condition, the disease should be as common as is generally believed. Another very prevalent desease here is the guinea-worm. The reader need hardly wonder at it, considering the unlimited outrages against every principle of cleanliness and sanitation that are permitted in the large tank at Oorun. Periodically cholera in its epidemic form commits its ravages in the Island. In a small community like this, the alarm soon developes into a panic and the consequence is, a general exodus of such as are able to leave the place.

Conclusion.—The above description, meagre and imperfect I confess, does not reveal anything remarkable, in a physical or economic point of view, and upon the whole a Bombay man or indeed any stranger will find Karanjah but a very poor and uninviting place and one which as a place of residence, notwithstanding its vicinity to Bombay, and notwithstanding that in the cold season of each year it is the favourite resort of many a sporting circle, will offer enough to wish for a change, if before that, one

does not die of ennui. I believe nevertheless that the place is rather unduly neglected and that its material resources and, relatively to Bombay, the advantages of its position have been too much overlooked. Had the late period of Bombay's unexampled prosperity continued, and the gigantic project of founding a new town at Hogg-Island been realized, Karanjah lying in its immediate vicinity should unquestionably have shared largely in the important material changes involved in it. It is true that of late years it has attracted greater attention for, in addition to the humbler work of serving as a feeder to the Bombay fish and vegetable market, it has supplied contractors with a considerable quantity of stone, moorum and sand for the various public works going on in Bombay; but should Bombay ever recover from the shock of the late crisis, it is not too much to expect that Karanjah will at no distant day, rise from its present insignificance. The building of a Jail in that Island has I believe been abandoned, on what grounds I am not aware; but the projected construction of a fort will doubtless be the first step towards its improvement. Again, the fact cannot be overlooked, that in a sanitary point of view or as a place of suburban residence, the Karanjah Hills are in no respect inferior either to Malabar Hill or Bandora Hill

they are certainly superior to both as commanding an entire view of the harbour and town of Bombay and were it only possible to place the ferry communication on a more efficient and reliable footing, the feasibility of converting the Karanjah Hills into a residence for Europeans will certainly offer a good subject for the consideration of some spirited capitalist.

THE END.

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